
Title: The Test of Vision

Author: Amon Amarth

--'o'==-\--'o'==-
Until the ends of time.
Ost nagramee ramen.
Till night doth come.
Rieme let droh x'hum.
And sweer darkness
Takes all.
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The Test of Vision

Knights who wish to
advance into the Halls of
the Paladins are required
to pass a test of Vision.
Failure in this test
results in death. There
has never been a case
where a failed knight has
survived. Even if a knight
manages to escape, the
members of the order
use their powers to
track the knight down.

The test for the Knight
centres on the theme of
the spiritual pilgrimage
for a vision of the God
Oblivion, a Vision of one
of the Anti-virtues that
he will live by and
protect, this way
enlightening the Knight
into the spiritual Truth
of Entropy. Typical
problems posed are: Will
the knight sacrifice
whatever is necessary -
power, fortune, a loved
companion, life itself - in
order to fulfil the
Vision? Will obedience win

out over sentiment and the heart? Will the knight obey an order at the sacrifice of the knight's own life or the lives of kin or loved ones?

The knights may be sent on missions or quests designed to prove their worthiness. The test is dangerous and often cruel in the extreme, but those who pass are as strong as steel forged in the fires of Entropy. The knight's advocate - the one person, who knows the knight best, determines the nature of the test. The advocate understands and appreciates the fact that a knight must be strong in order to fulfil the Vision.

There can be no weak links in the chain. Therefore, the test is never made easy for the supplicant. Quite the contrary, no advocate wants to be known as the sponsor of a weak and ineffective knight, and, therefore, the test is designed to be as difficult as possible. Thus, the Test contains at least three encounters, which the Knight must face alone.

Knights who pass the test are free to take an Anti-Virtue that they will follow and protect. This is the Anti-virtue of their advocate. The ascension of the knight into the next Rank takes place in a solemn ceremony at the knighthood's headquarters, The Temple of Oblivion.

The knight is kept in seclusion in the Temple of Oblivion, fasting and praying, for 1 week prior to the ceremony. At the end of this period, during which the knight receives the Deep Vision, the knight is blessed by dark clerics and sent forth.

The knight comes before the rank and file of Paladins, including Lord Amon Amarth himself. The Procession of Paladins is enacted. His advocate formally presents the knight. The Grand Paladin bestows the advancement in rank upon the knight, and the knight is officially accepted into the Halls of the Paladins.

The new Paladin then undergoes a period of training. This gruelling instruction generally takes place in the Temple of Oblivion, but occasionally extends into other regions if the training specifically requires. Only after this training is the knight considered a full Paladin.